

On Thu, Dec 1, 2011 at 8:21 AM, Parent wrote:
Good Morning Mrs. Chapin and Ms. Pelosi,

I'd like to bring a book from the library to your attention, which I don't think is appropriate for Elementary School-aged children. The name of the book is "The Hunger Games".

(Name omitted) checked this book out and had been reading it at school. But when he brought it home and (name omitted) and I had the chance to look it over, we were disturbed by the book's subject matter and just as much surprised that HES would have this book in the first place.

I'm well aware of the freedom of speech in our country, but part of our jobs as parents and educators is to protect our young children from inappropriate experiences and situations, which we think includes books.

Here is an excerpt from a review about this book:

Profanity/Graphic Violence

The word h--- appears once. In this tale of 24 teenagers forced to kill each other, readers follow a number of gruesome, bloody and otherwise disturbing scenes. One tribute murders another by snapping his neck. Other tributes are killed by spears, arrows, blows to the head with rocks and the stings of mutated yellow jackets. Wounds ooze blood and puss, and the wounded smell festering flesh. One of the final tributes is mauled by a pack of rabid dog-like creatures for hours before he dies. Katniss also mentions how, in previous games, tributes were killed by venomous snakes, went insane from thirst or froze to death. One previous contestant tried to eat the tributes he'd killed, but the Gamemakers stopped this because it didn't play well with the audience. Leaders in the Capitol cut out the tongues of those who disobey them. Despite the many alarming images, readers find little if any gratuitous gore. The descriptions emphasize the horrible plight of the tributes and the gross desensitization of the Capitol dwellers.

The entire review can be examined at:

http://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/protecting_your_family/book-reviews/h/hunger-games.aspx

I do understand that this book was awarded the American Library Association Best Book for Young Adults in 2009; but I don't think a 10-year old, elementary school child qualifies as a young adult.

I would like to hear what the HES Administration position would be on this matter. In the meantime, we would appreciate if any book that (omitted) (or omitted) checks out of the HES Library, is sent home first for us to review and determine if we think its appropriate for them at their respective points of development.

Bobbie and I love HES and what the Administration and Teachers are doing, yet would like a little help in this regard.

Sincerely,

(Parent's name omitted)

Good day Esther,

I never heard back from you on this matter. Did you think this book was appropriate for an Elementary School?

Thank you in advance,

(Parent's name omitted)

Hi (Parent's name omitted),

My apologies, I didn't know you were awaiting a reply from me. I do think this book is appropriate. Like you mentioned, this series has received a number of awards and honors and with the movie being released soon it is growing in popularity.

I encourage students to show their book(s) to their parents for approval, especially if it is out of their reading level, and encourage them to bring the book back and choose another title if needed.

I received the email asking that your sons bring any books home that they check-out or are assigned to read and have been reminding them to do this when they have library visits. Please let me know if there is anything else I can help you with.

Thank you,

Esther Melnik- Librarian